

A GUIDE TO  
INTEGRATE  
READING AND WRITING

MASTER'S PROJECT

Submitted to the Department of Elementary Education,  
University of Dayton, in Partial Fulfillment  
of the Requirements for the Degree  
Master of Science in Education

by

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION TO THE PROBLEM

### Purpose for the Study

In a sense, life is like a gigantic jigsaw puzzle. All the pieces, each one representing a different aspect of an individual, fit together to form a unique picture, and each picture is different from the next. No two people are the same. Yet, there is a connection and a purpose here. All the pieces, however disparate, must fit, and in the end make a whole person.

In education, however, the pieces tend to remain scrambled in several boxes, in several rooms. Often, students have four to five different teachers, each one trying to sort through their set of pieces (science, mathematics, reading, etc.) to make the puzzle pieces fit together for their particular subject and purpose. Little consideration is given to the needs of the other teachers, let alone to the coherent needs of students across the curriculum. In this situation, there is little coherence between the different disciplines, and students often fail to see a purpose in what they are doing from one class to another. Even within the same class, students are often puzzled by the abrupt jump from one puzzle piece to another.

If the purpose of education is to prepare students to perform successfully in society, why do educators continue to view each discipline as a separate entity with little or no connection to the student's life? Would education not benefit

students by making learning connected and meaningful? One way to accomplish this goal is to integrate the curriculum, not only in reading and writing, but also language use in all content areas. According to Tchudi (1991) the movement towards integration is supported by the idea the English is naturally interdisciplinary. Language is learned best when it is connected to something else in any of the different disciplines or to one's personal experiences.

The writer found through personal experience that an integrated, coherent, curriculum, especially in the areas of reading and writing, seems to help students make connections to their lives and make learning more meaningful. In an integrated program students can see the purpose of what they are learning, and it becomes useful in their lives because they are using what they have learned. All uses of English - as language, as communication - are related to each other and to life (Faux, 1969).

Today many educators are being forced to change their curricular emphasis for one special purpose - to have students pass proficiency tests. There are pressures on school districts, administrators, teachers, and students to perform well on proficiency tests. What is the best way to prepare for these tests? Should students be taught to memorize discrete facts or should students be helped to develop competency with language use across the spectrum of the disciplines? It is quite likely that an integrated curriculum in reading and writing will be

beneficial to the students in terms of proficiency testing, and will benefit them as learners and communicators in the everyday sense.

In both the reading and the English portions of the Ohio proficiency test, students are given selections to read and are asked to respond in writing. Gone are the tests with multiple choice answers only. Students now have to respond with a short answer (one or two sentences), or with an extended response of several paragraphs. These types of questions are also included in the science, mathematics, and citizenship portions of the proficiency test. In this light, it is quite possible that teaching with an integrated reading and writing curriculum through all subjects could prepare students for greater success in proficiency testing.

Exposure to whole language theory and practice has made the writer aware of the need to integrate the curriculum. With this in mind, the writer received approval from the school district administration and the district curriculum director to integrate reading and writing in one seventh grade unit (100 students) based upon the reading/writing coherence model that is detailed in this paper. The curriculum guide developed for this purpose will be used in the fall (1996-97 school year) as a pilot program for the middle school, grade seven.

## Statement of the Problem

The purpose of this project was to design an integrated reading and writing guide for use by seventh grade teachers.

## Definition of Terms

Integrated reading and writing is an approach used for reading and writing instruction which maintains that language is learned through it's meaningful use and which incorporates the simultaneous use of literature, reading, and writing.

Proficiency test refers to the Ohio Proficiency Test given to students in an attempt to certify a certain level of proficiency in the different subject areas as a requirement for high school graduation. This testing system is also used to identify individual student deficiencies and district deficiencies for intervention purposes.



## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

In this chapter the review of the literature is presented. It is divided into the following sections: reasons for integrating reading and writing, similarities between reading and writing, and guidelines for integrating reading and writing.

#### Reasons for Integrating Reading and Writing

The first of several reasons for the complete integration of reading and writing across the curriculum is to provide students with a comprehensive study of a piece of literature. Bushman (1992) notes adults do not read or write with the purpose of dissecting and analyzing for a selected reading or writing skill. Instead, adults read and write to enjoy the totality of the work and to get meaning from it or put meaning into it. This is what teachers can model for their students through using an integrated curriculum -- integration meaning "wholeness." According to Faux and Larsen (1969), students can be provided with the "whole" program in reading and writing; it should not be just bits, pieces, and unrelated segments. This is not to say that specific isolated skills should not be reinforced. However, teaching with a comprehensive study of literature, will enable the reader to respond to the author's work as a complete work. Students will learn to respond by considering why they responded, by trusting their own responses, and by

learning to respect other students examples. Eventually, Bushman (1992) believes readers will see themselves as writers, and writers as readers.

Another reason for integrating reading and writing is that students will see the relationship between the different aspects of the language process when applied to realistic situations. Tchudi (1991) explores the growth language arts has taken in the past two decades. The union of reading and writing, through the concepts of whole language and language across the curriculum, has developed because of the increase in understanding that language is an integrated way of conducting human affairs; adults do it each and everyday. In every integration model, students are learning the English language and are able to use what they have learned. More importantly, as Faux and Larsen (1969) state, students see a purpose in what they are learning, and they can apply what they have learned in every day life situations. The end result achieves Atwell's (1987) goal of students learning to function in the adult world as total literate people and to see the importance of the meaning contained in what they encounter.

The benefits to students with special needs, such as students identified as at risk or bilingual students, is another reason to integrate reading and writing. In one school system, Tchudi (1991) observed, a teacher commented on the success of a literature-based reading program, which is a type of integration, in his/her multicultural classroom, in which the

students have different cultural backgrounds. The key factor is the flexibility an integrated curriculum offers to the teacher. The teacher has a much wider choice of materials and procedures to use in the classroom. This flexibility also provides new methods for teaching at-risk students. If any student, not just those identified with a learning disability, is unsuccessful, the teacher can choose another method or procedure; he/she is no longer limited to the basal textbook with supplemental dittos or worksheets. According to Faux and Larsen (1969) there is enough flexibility in an integrated program for students to have choices. A belief of Atwell (1987) is that when students are given the freedom to make choices, they are more successful.

An additional reason to integrate reading and writing is the bond created between students, their writing, and literature. In an integrated classroom, Bushman (1992) states students have the opportunity to share and to discuss both their reading and their writing. Neither subject is short changed, but rather each one expands upon the other. Additionally, Tchudi (1991) describes that this bond will produce in the student a new love of reading and greater fluency in writing and speaking, and it brings the student one step closer to becoming a fully functioning person in the adult world.

In this section the writer discussed reasons for integrating reading and writing. The next section deals with the similarities between reading and writing.

## Similarities Between Reading and Writing

Reading and writing are inextricably connected, one with the other. It is inconceivable to try to develop a reader without also developing a writer at the same time and vice versa. Adults are never ask to be only readers or only writers. To master one skill, one must master the other. The skills involved in reading and writing can be compared to the skills of breathing in and out. The concept of breathing in is not separated from the skills necessary for breathing out to stay alive although they involve different responses from the nervous system and the diaphragm. In essence, Fox (1993) contends learning to read cannot be separated from learning to write. Tchudi (1991) stresses that the trends in language arts clearly point to the obvious link "that writing itself is a process of reading one's own work and reading is an act of composing" (pg. 15). Atwell (1987) claims combining the two concepts creates students as writers who also read and readers who also write.

Another similarity between reading and writing involves the use of background knowledge from the personal experiences - what students bring with themselves to reading and writing. Hasselbring and Goin (1991) contend students need to be able to make some type of connection, either as a writer or as a reader, with the new content information. As readers, the students become actively involved making a connection to understand the meaning the author is trying to convey. As writers, the students need to draw from personal experiences,

to develop a mental image and to share it with others.

Kucer and Rhodes (1986) believe background knowledge also has an impact upon the type of instruction teachers present to students. For example, when students are exposed to a skill oriented method of instruction, the students view reading and writing as a series of isolated skills, with little or no connected meaning. This is reflected in their writing and reading. In writing, students will use only words they know how to spell. The writing will have little meaning and the students will be afraid to take chances. When students choose books to read, the students will select those that do not require taking a risk. However, continues Kucer and Rhodes (1986), students exposed to instruction that demonstrates the importance of constructing meaning are able to read and write with meaning, in addition to demonstrating all the skills required by the curriculum. Their reading and writing is also much more fluent and powerful.

The acts of both reading and writing require active participation of the students to make learning meaningful is another similarity. Kucer (1985) states no longer is the reader considered a passive decoder or reading only a skill dedicated to abstracting the author's intended meaning. With an integrated approach, writers are also active participants through generating, structuring, and encoding thought to paper. The belief that the writer is the original source or creator of meaning now becomes expanded. Both Hasselbring and Goin (1991)

and Kucer (1985) believe the integration of reading and writing has made it possible for both the reader and writer to become actively involved in the process of creating meaning so that both reading and writing are an act of "meaning making". According to Flood and Lapp (1985) as active readers, students need to become involved with the text -- to ask themselves repeatedly if they understand the text. Jensen and Roser (1990) identify writers and readers as students who are thinkers; they analyze and synthesize; they compare and contrast; they assimilate and accommodate; they weigh and define. Readers and writers are active members and users of the language process.

A very simple similarity, one that is easily over looked, is that reading and writing are both forms of the same communication. In the past, before books and before general literacy, according to Jensen and Roser (1990), reading and writing took place in one individual's mind, and it was then shared orally, with others. Now, there is a relationship between individuals, where reading and writing are part of the daily communication process and the text is created by individuals to have an effect on another. Shanahan (1988) describes an effective reader as one who must be critical regarding the author's intentions, and evaluate the accuracy and quality of the text and its meaning - both literal and constructed. An effective writer must consider the needs of the intended audience and what meaning they may bring to the work. The writer must decide what the audience wants and then provide them with the

information or meaning. In short, according to Tierney and LaZansky (1980), the communication process involves good writers who think about good readers and vice versa.

In this section, the writer discussed the similarities between reading and writing. The writer examines the guidelines for integrating reading and writing in the next section.

### Guidelines for Integrating Reading and Writing

To switch to an integrated curriculum, one guideline is that both reading and writing must be taught coherently; one does not replace the other. Shanahan (1988) points out that even though there are many similarities between reading and writing there are just as many differences. If reading and writing were identical processes, then there would be a direct correlation between reading and writing scores. This is not the case. Studies done by Shanahan (1980) and Stotsky (1983) have shown that some students were good readers but poor writers and some students were good writers but poor readers. If students are going to learn to write, more emphasis needs to be put on teaching writing skills, and students need more time and more opportunities to write. Integration does not mean eliminating one aspect in favor of the other. Shanahan (1988) states teachers need to provide as much balanced reading and writing instruction as is possible. Both skills should be taught daily.

For students to be successful in an integrated classroom, another guideline is for teachers to provide students with the proper learning environment. Pryor (1990) stresses the physical features of the room must allow for students to be full and active participants in the reading and writing process. A typical classroom would have a variety of books available, different types of papers, areas for conferencing, materials and directions for publishing; in other words, all the necessary supplies a reader and writer need to complete the task. The bulletin board and walls would be covered with examples of students' work rather than teacher generated decorations.

The proper learning environment also includes the atmosphere in the classroom. Language learning is risky. Writing is risky. According to Harste (1990), in order for students to be able to take the necessary risks, teachers need to provide students with a supportive, low risk environment. Students need to know that exploration, or trial and error, are accepted and expected. In this type of environment, teachers would use the student's mistakes or errors and turn them into a positive learning situation. Student errors give teachers some clues as to the direction of the needed instruction. Pryor (1990) describes a feeling of respect created between writers, readers, and teachers when students can engage in making their own meaning in a classroom that minimize the effect of risk taking.

An essential guideline, which further develops a low risk environment, it is for teachers to model how they, themselves,



read and write. During silent sustained reading, Atwell (1987) emphasizes that teachers should also be reading, not grading papers. Teachers reading while students read demonstrates to students the importance and the value of reading as an activity in itself. Pryor (1990) states the use of silent sustained reading provides students with an opportunity to develop individual taste and desire as they become adult readers who read for pleasure.

Modeling the writing process is probably more difficult, but one of the most beneficial guideline for teachers. It is not easy to be a writer. Students have to be made aware that even the most famous authors, like Stephen King, R. L. Stine, and Gary Paulsen started out just as they have started. Teachers need to show their work to students at all the different stages of development. They have to let the students see the notes written on napkins or scraps of paper, the rough drafts, and the published pieces. Romano (1987) describes writing as a process that is the essence of learning through participation. Teachers willing to share their work with the class "assume a humane, participatory stance toward learning and teaching the craft of writing" (Romano 1987, pg. 29). Romano (1987) further states students are more receptive to teachers when the teacher is writing right along beside them. They observe the teacher struggling with his/her own work also; the teacher and student can empathize with each other. According to Pryor (1990), teachers who write and share with their students form

a partnership in learning that goes beyond the classroom.

Another guideline for integrating reading and writing includes the selection, organization, and implementation of instructional materials. Reading and writing are on-going processes. Students should be given endless opportunities to write or read meaningful texts everyday. Aulls (1985) states teachers should also expose students to a variety of different texts. In addition, students need to learn how to read and write in the expository as well as the narrative style. Similarly, Pryor (1990) believes it is important to provide students with newspapers, magazines and other functional materials as well as novels and non-fiction work.

Providing students with a variety of opportunities to enable them to make connections with their lives and backgrounds in a meaningful way is another guideline for integrating reading and writing. Pryor (1990) contends that learning language is most effective when it is used in its natural context. Language, thus developed, is meaningful, functional, relevant and belongs to the child. Learning, according to Harste (1990), is a process that begins with the known and moves toward the unknown. Comprehension and learning are viewed as a search for patterns and connections and growth is seen as a search for wider patterns and connections. As students learn, they are searching for way to make connections with their background knowledge. Students are able to make language their own by making these connections. What students bring to class in the form of

background knowledge will make a difference; not every student will be able to connect in the same way. Harste (1990) contends that, in a literacy learning environment, students will encounter experiences where their reading and writing will be relevant and purposeful; reading and writing experiences to be used in their lives.

In this section the writer reviewed the guidelines on how to integrate reading and writing.

## CHAPTER III

### PROCEDURE

Developing a guide to implement an integrated reading and writing program required some research involving the how's, why's, and what's. The writer reviewed journal articles, professional textbooks, and consulted two experts for information on how to develop and to write the guide.

#### Review of Journal Articles

The articles chosen by the writer were selected because of the methods and strategies suggested in order to make learning more meaningful to the students. Lipson, Valencia, Wixson, and Peters (1993) state in their article, "Integration and Thematic Teaching: Integration to Improve Teaching and Learning," the most common method of integration is the use of thematic units. Another avenue to consider in developing an integrated reading and writing guide is the use of literature-base instruction; a concept similar to thematic units. In the article, "Facilitating Learning Through Interconnections: A Concept Approach to Core Literature Units," Silva and Delgado-Larocco (1993) stated literature based instruction is centered around a carefully selected piece of literary work and requires three different type of literature.

Other articles reviewed contained teaching strategies to integrate reading and writing. The article by Bushman (1992),

provides examples on how literature can be used in both the reading and writing workshops. Two similar strategies are described in the articles by Gambrell (1985) and Bromely (1989). These articles emphasize the importance of journal writing, either dialogue or buddy journals. Hadaway and Florenz (1988) suggest five strategies for teaching vocabulary as a process.

### Review of Professional Textbooks

The format for structuring the class, time management, student goals, and evaluations are based on the principles from three well known authors and teachers in the area of whole language. In the Middle, Atwell (1987) explains how to center class time around the concept of workshops. Rief (1992) offers suggestions on student expectations in her book, Seeking Diversity. In addition to Atwell and Rief, Routman's (1994) book, Invitations, discusses the value of evaluating the reading and writing process, as well as the final product.

### Critique by Experts

The proposed guide was to be used as a pilot program in a middle school. Therefore, the writer had two administrators in the district, the curriculum supervisor and the school principal, a former English teacher, review the guide. Both indicated the guide would be a good supplement to the course of study and would be a step in the right direction of stressing literature, one of the district's goals.

## CHAPTER IV

### RESULTS

#### Purpose

The purpose of this guide is to integrate reading and writing instruction. This guide is designed to enable students to make connections between their personal lives and what they are learning in school, known as authentic instruction. Instructional strategies are structured so that students can be active learners in a low risk environment. In essence, students are led to become responsible for their own learning, and for constructing their own meaning, so that they can begin to function in the adult world as proficient users of language who also enjoy reading and writing as pleasurable activities. Educators have been successful in teaching students how to read, however, they have been unsuccessful in instilling the desire to read.

#### Description of the School

This integrated reading and writing guide is designed to be implemented as a pilot program for one seventh grade unit in the fall (1996-97 school year) in the writer's school. This middle school, grades six through eight, has approximately 900 students. Each grade level is divided into units: three units in both sixth and seventh grade and two units in eight grade. Each unit is comprised of around one hundred to one hundred

and fifty students with anywhere from four to six teachers, depending upon size. In the unit where the writer works, there are four teachers: one each for mathematics, social studies, science, and language arts. Using an experimental flexible schedule, the unit will have extended class time for each of the four subjects. Each class will be sixty minutes long instead of the usual forty-five minutes. This extended time will benefit all of the disciplines by allowing additional time for in-depth activities such as science labs, plays, and integrated reading and writing activities. Although this program is designed for a specific school, with some adaptations, the writer believes it could be applicable in other schools or districts.

The guide is divided in two sections: student goals and thematic units. As a pilot program for only one unit, the school district's course of study must continue to be met for every student. Therefore, this guide is to be used as a supplement when implementing the district's curriculum. The emphasis on integration of reading and writing will occur through the application of thematic units and strategies in which the language arts material is presented to the students.

The school week is divided into four "workshop" days: two days each for reading and writing. A workshop is a brief, but complete, introduction of a concept or topic with the remainder of the class time spent in independent student reading or writing, or both. The remaining day in the week is considered a "flex" day. The students would participate in activities

that require total involvement as an entire class (not independent work), and would continue for the entire class time. Examples might be response groups, publishing, project/work and presentations, book sharing, etc. On workshop days, the teacher would present a five to ten minute mini-lesson focusing on a particular skill or concept. The focus of these lessons might be on procedural issues, on a specific objective from the curriculum, or on a common problem/concern students are having in their work. At times, it might be necessary to have a series of mini-lessons on one concept over several days. Following the mini-lesson, students would then work individually on either their reading or writing, or both.

After the selected activities and lessons are completed in this guide, students will have been given a variety of experiences and the skills necessary to begin to function as competent readers and writers. Their application should help them find reading and writing a pleasurable activity. Teaching in subsequent grades would be expected to build upon these skills and concepts at each level to continue the process outlined in this guide.



## Goals

### Writing

- to write five (5) pages of rough draft per week (maintenance of working folder)
- to take at least three (3) pieces of writing to final copy (maintenance of portfolio)
- to read the three pieces of finished writing to three people and respond as a reader to other writers
- to have a teacher conference after each first draft for the three final pieces

### Reading

- to read for one half hour five nights a week
- to log reading time
- to respond to reading in a letter form to the teacher once a week (one full page minimum)
- to maintain a list of books read with date completed, title, author and recommendations for other readers
- to record all notes and vocabulary from class
- to keep a daily journal of thoughts, feelings, ideas, etc.
- to complete a project relating to one book read (construction of a visual aid is required)

## Mystery/Suspense Unit

### Objectives:

1. to read a book by either R. L. Stine or Christopher Pike as an example of mystery or suspense
2. to read another mystery or suspense book (self selected from suggested book list) for comparison purposes
3. to write a descriptive paper on a topic of student choice
4. to write two finished pieces of work (form and style of student choice)

### Suggested Strategies:

#### Description Of Students

(Obj. 3)

Divide the class into small groups of four to five students. On one day each week a student from each group sits in front of the class, while the other students and teacher describe in writing the person from their group (the teacher writes about each student). When completed, students give their papers to the person whom they have described. At the end, each student would select the best description of himself/herself to be put in the class book.

#### Acrostic Poem

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

Students choose a character from a book they have read and write an acrostic poem. This could also be done using the student's own name.

## Biopoem

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

Use the form for a biopoem to describe a character from a novel the student has read (see Appendix A: Biopoem).

## Box Of Crayons

(Obj. 3, 4)

Orally read the poem Box of Crayons. Have the students discuss what is common in all the stanzas. Let each student pick a crayon from a bag and then write a stanza about their color. This could be put in the class book (see Appendix B: Box of Crayons).

## Adjective/Adverb Rating Scale

(Obj. 3, 4)

Brainstorm a list of common adjectives and adverbs. Discuss what other words might be used instead of the common word and then rank the words according to intensity. For example, the word nice is commonly used to describe someone. What other words could be used instead that are more intense or more descriptive?

## Turn, Turn, Turn

(Obj. 1, 2, 3, 4)

In this exercise it is the class's job to describe the setting in a mystery or suspense novel. Have students form a circle. Going around the circle in order, each student will add a word, which is grammatically correct, in order to complete a descriptive sentence that the teacher begins. When the sentence reaches a logical conclusion, have the next student

begin a new sentence. When students give an incorrect response, they must sit down and are eliminated from the game. Keep playing till only one student is left.

#### Catch Me If You Can

(Obj. 3, 4)

This activity uses the skill of detail analysis. First, obtain a copy of fingerprint patterns. Next, fingerprint each student, making a complete set of all ten fingers. Students will then use the sample patterns to decide which pattern most closely matches their own fingerprints. Following this, each student will write a brief physical and personal description of him/herself, which the other members of the class will use to try to identify the student.

#### Any Last Requests?

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

If the villain of the book has committed a capital crime (punishable by death), then this exercise is applicable. Each member of the class will imagine himself/herself to be a reporter who is taking the character's last statement during his/her last hours on death row. The statement must detail the crime(s) committed, explain the criminal's actions, and give reasons for a possible pardon.

#### Dream On

(Obj. 3, 4)

This activity is designed to appeal to every person's fantasy. Each student must plan what he/she believes would

be the perfect crime, step by step, beginning to end. The student must include the following: specific crime; accomplices; location and layout of crime scene; tools and weapons; means of escape; clothing/disguise; and alibi.

Read each aloud and have the class find flaws, if any.

### Shifty Eyes

(Obj. 3, 4)

The depiction of a criminal in mystery novels is often romanticized and stereotyped so that criminals are often easy to identify. But are such depictions always accurate? In reality, criminals can be wide-eyed maniacs or the boy next door. Obtain several pictures, one being that of an actual criminal. Describe the crime, and have the class try to choose the guilty person. Discuss the deceptive qualities of appearance. The book, Encyclopedia of American Crime, by Carl Sifakis, may help with this project.

### Seeing Is Believing

(Obj. 1, 2, 3, 4)

This project can be an extremely effective demonstration about the credibility of witnesses. Arrange for a student from another class to come in during the course of the lesson and do one of the following: (a) have him/her start an argument, pretend to assault the teacher and run out; or (b) have him/her give the teacher a message that requires the teacher to leave the room. The student takes a purse/wallet or other object, which was purposely left in plain sight. The teacher returns

and discovers the theft.

After the class has settled down, ask them to fully describe in writing the perpetrator of the crime: height, weight, eyes, hair color, complexion, clothing, movements, etc. Then have the "perpetrator" return so that the students can see how accurate they were.

#### Front Page News

(Obj. 1, 4)

Literary crimes are expected to be more spectacular than those committed in real life, but is this always the case? After completing the assigned novel, the students list and categorize all the crimes perpetrated. Next, they locate and research a real-life crime similar to one found in the story, either in style or motivation. Based on their findings, they will compare and contrast the two in writing and present findings to the class.

#### Descriptive Details

(Obj. 3, 4)

Read pages 24 - 34 in the book, Thinking Like a Writer, by Lou Willet Stanek. Each paragraph could be used as the focus for mini-lessons to develop descriptive writing techniques.

## Historical Fiction Unit

### Objectives:

1. to gain a better understanding of the effects of a war by reading Stepping on the Cracks, by Mary Downing Hahn
2. to be aware of other perspectives of war by reading another book (self selected from suggested book list) dealing with World War II
3. to write a friendly letter to a war veteran
4. to write two finished pieces of work (form and style of student choice)

### Suggested Strategies:

#### Take A Stand!

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

Throughout history people have made sacrifices for causes they've believed in. After deciding what the major issue, of the novel is, each student will write a "newspaper editorial" from the point of view of one of the characters. The format should be as follows: (a) statement of the problem; (b) proof that the problem exists; (c) proposal of a solution; and (d) a call for public action.

#### Come To Order!

(Obj. 1, 2)

For this activity, the classroom is converted into a courtroom. A character from the novel is put on trial for treason by the class. The following roles are played by

students: defendant (book character), prosecuting attorney, defense attorney, witnesses (book characters), judge and jury. Students selected for the parts of the judge and attorneys will largely be responsible for controlling the action. Therefore, choose those members of the class who are well-versed in the details of the book, have verbal ability, and are able to "think on their feet". Use actual events from the book, or create new ones, and outline courtroom "rules of procedure" ahead of time.

#### Pick A Fight!

(Obj. 1)

Ask some students to pretend to be characters in the novel and to ad-lib arguments on an issue prominent in the story. They should keep true to the character's traits, temperaments and motivations as far as possible. Encourage students to use language appropriate to the novel and the time period.

#### Mistaken Identity

(Obj. 1, 2)

Historical figures often are difficult to deal with because students have no idea who they were or are confused as to their actual roles in history. In order to get a sense of the class's "H.Q." (history quotient), attempt this exercise before beginning to read. Give students the names of several people who appear in the book and who actually lived (e.g. Adolph Hitler, Winston Churchill, Joseph Stalin, etc.). Then, without giving any more information, ask students to write who these people were



and what role they played in history. The teacher has the option of correcting student errors immediately or having students rectify their own misconceptions as they read.

Please Respond

(Obj. 3)

Get a list of names and addresses of war veterans from VFW Posts, American Legion Posts, or Veteran's Hospital. The students would write a letter to one of the veterans asking them to respond to get their feelings, thoughts, ideas about the issues of war.

I Want To Go Back

(Obj. 4)

Would returning to a different time be as much fun as people fantasize it to be? Given the choice to return to any period of history, each student must decide what time period to return to and why, where to go, whom to meet, and what to do. Students would be encouraged to research the period and its people.

Extra, Extra!

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

Newspapers are one of the oldest forms of mass media and should be familiar to all students. Using the events of the class novel, and keeping in mind the time period in which it was set, have the class create the front page of a newspaper. It must contain a flag (title) or banner, and a main story and headline featuring the most significant event, as well as

secondary stories with headlines, and drawings or pictures relating to the time period.

#### Stick To Your Guns!

(Obj. 1)

Debates have long been a classic form of confrontation. Choose a major issue found in the class novel. Select students to represent the two points of view, either using actual people from the story or generic characters. Encourage student to stick to the standard debate format: (a) each side gives its opening arguments (time limit); (b) each side rebuts the arguments of the other side (time limit); (c) both sides respond to questions from a panel or from the audience; and (d) the class chooses the winner by voting.

#### Paper Cranes

(Obj. 4)

Read the story Sadako and the Thousand Paper Cranes, by Eleanor Coerr. Share, discuss, and write about all the different emotions displayed by the characters. Demonstrate to the students how to make paper cranes out of wrapping paper.

#### Symbols

(Obj. 4)

Read the book, The Wall, by Eve Bunting. Brainstorm all the different ways in which people or events are symbolized (e.g. monuments, ribbons, and arm banners, etc.). Students would create their way of symbolizing a person or event.

## Yesterday and Today

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

Identify and compare the qualities of the lead characters portrayed in the novels read. Discuss what type of people they were and how they survived the war. Choose a current famous person and compare their qualities to those of the book character. How would the person of today handle the same situation as the book character?

## Invent A Character

(Obj. 1, 2, 3, 4)

Gather information about the specific time period from books, movies, and other reference materials. Create a composite character who fits this time period using these materials. This would be done as a picture book or as an oral presentation.

## Newsworthy

(Obj. 4)

Given a news headline from the time period of World War II, students would write an article to fit the headline including the who, what, when, where, and how. The book, Reporting World War II, by Hynes, Matthews, Sorel, and Spiller contains newspaper and magazine articles, transcripts of radio broadcasts, and excerpts from books by Americans during WW II.

## Picture This

(Obj. 4)

Research a topic relating to World War II. Write and illustrate a picture book using the information obtained from the research.

## Realistic Fiction Unit

### Objectives:

1. to read the novel, Darnell Rock Reporting by Walter Dean Myers as an example of realistic fiction
2. to read another realistic fiction book (self selected from suggested book list) for comparison purposes
3. to write a newspaper article that would be put in the class newspaper
4. to write two finished pieces of work (form and style of student choice)

### Suggested Strategies:

Dare Me!

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

The student must first decide what the main character's biggest challenge was, and then describe how he/she handled it. Finally the student will imagine and explain how he/she would behave given the same circumstances.

"E" Is For Effort

(Obj. 1, 2)

In this project the students will get a chance to grade the book on the following elements: plot, characterization, setting, theme, and style. Each element will receive a grade and an explanation based upon a class developed grading scale.

## Cover Me

(Obj. 1, 2)

Book covers often seem very plain and boring to students. In this project each student will create an original cover for the book they are reading. It must include title, author, and an appropriate visual concept. Stress that the artwork must relate directly to a character or idea expressed in the story. Have them actually use the covers, and change them 2/3 of the way through the novel.

## Turnabout Is Fair Play

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

Given the chance, students would probably like to change things about the novel they are reading. Give students the opportunity to alter one character, one event, and one setting. From the book, they then must explain their reasoning and detail what the ramifications of these changes might be.

## Details, Details

(Obj. 1, 2, 3, 4)

Authors are not infallible. There is always room for improvement, and that is the job that is being given to the class. Each student will imagine himself/herself to be the publisher and will draft a letter of criticism to the author pointing out elements that could be improved in the work studied.

## Paving Paradise

(Obj. 1, 2, 3, 4)

Present the class with the following hypothetical situation: a popular neighborhood park, which is also a bird sanctuary,

is going to be converted into a shopping mall. Divide the class into groups and have them take the points of view as each of the following: conservation group members, land developers, local residents, park employees, and store owners. They must research and prepare presentations for discussion and debate.

Most Likely To...

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

Students often feel far removed from the characters they read about. In this exercise they will imagine the character to be a member of the student body of their school. They are then asked to create a yearbook entry for this person which includes a drawing of the character (as they envision him/her), a list of activities, what they might have been voted by the class, and an appropriate quote.

Tell Me Another One

(Obj. 1, 2, 3, 4)

Often, students find book titles simplistic, or perhaps confusing. In this assignment, students are given the opportunity to create a new title, which should reflect plot, characters, or theme. They can also write a short justification of their choice.

Take A Stand!

(Obj. 1, 2, 3, 4)

Through history people have made sacrifices for causes they've believed in. After deciding what the major issue of the novel is, each student will write an editorial as one of

the characters. The format should be: (a) statement of the problem; (b) proof that the problem exists; (c) proposal of a solution; and (d) a call for public action.

#### By The Numbers

(Obj. 1)

This exercise demonstrates to the class the numerous options an author has in creating a plot. Divide the story into as many parts as possible. Write each plot highlight on a separate index card with the backs numbered in sequence. Display them to the class after shuffling, and then have a student try to put them in the proper order. Give hints to guide students only when necessary. Discuss how their choices differed from the author's and how plot changes would alter the story.

#### Homeless

(Obj. 1, 3, 4)

Listen to the song, "Another Day in Paradise," by Phil Collins. Supply copies of the lyrics. Discuss the meaning and the feelings expressed in the song. Students could respond to how they would react in the same situation.

#### Fact Vs. Opinion

(Obj. 3, 4)

Read several newspaper articles. Students could identify what information in the articles was fact and was opinion. Discuss how this effects the readers interpretation of the article.

## Read The Paper

(Obj. 3, 4)

Each section of the newspaper could be the focus of mini lessons. After discussing a particular section, students could then write an article based upon the style of that section.



## Adventure Unit

### Objectives:

1. to read Hatchet, by Gary Paulsen, as an example of an adventure story
2. to read another adventure book (self selected from suggested book list) for comparison purposes
3. to write an adventure story of student choice
4. to write two finished pieces of work (form and style of student choice)

### Suggested Strategies:

#### In The Eye Of The Beholder

(Obj. 1, 2, 3, 4)

The perception of a hero's lifestyle in adventure novels can be interpreted in two different ways. One person might view the action as an exciting fantasy while someone else might find it a frightening and reckless experience. Students must defend and explain in writing one of the following statements using examples from the book they have read to support their opinion: (a) the hero/heroine leads an exciting life, or (b) the hero/heroine leads a scary, dangerous life.

#### Picture This

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

Since many adventure books are packed full of action, they lend themselves easily to interpretation in comic strip form. In this project, have students choose a specific event in the

book and create a six-frame comic strip that highlights the main action of this event. Emphasize that artistic ability is not mandatory: stick figures are sufficient as long as students supplement the visual with bits of dialogue.

### Stranded

(Obj. 1, 3, 4)

The class is told that they are trapped in a remote setting similar to that found in the story. They must decide what three items they would most like to have with them. Their choices do not have to include necessities for survival. There are no right or wrong choices. They will follow up by explaining their choices in writing.

### Tough Enough

(Obj. 1)

Using the setting of the novel studied, the students should imagine themselves to be adventurers who must journey through the territory described in the book. Taking note of the climate and time period, they must create a survival kit for use in this setting. As an option, have the students actually assemble the kit from items at home or supplied by the teacher.

### And The Winner Is...

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

The students are told that they will be special guests at the annual "Fictional Hero of the Year" awards banquet. Students must choose which character they feel is most deserving of this honor. They will then write an introduction for this

person that includes his or her most notable achievements and the reasons for this choice. Keeping in the mind the character's unique personality and speech patterns, they will also write and deliver before the class an acceptance speech for the award.

#### Coming Attractions

(Obj. 1)

Many chapters end in cliffhangers. At the end of every section of the class novel being read, have the students predict in writing what is going to happen next. Stress to the class not to "peek" ahead but just to use the clues the author leaves and their own imagination. There will probably be differences of opinion. Have the class vote on the most likely future event. Keep a running score as to how often students guess correctly.

#### It's All In The Cards

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

A conclusion is not necessarily the end. Often the reader is left to decide where the story would have gone had the author continued. In this activity students are given the opportunity to move the story five years into the future. They are asked to tell where the main character is, what his/her personal relationships are, what he/she is now doing, and how his/her life has been affected by the events in the work.

#### Be Advised

(Obj. 1, 2, 3, 4)

Students sometimes feel that they have the answers to a character's problems. In this exercise they first must write

a letter describing a problem encountered by the main character in the novel. Acting as an impartial observer, they must then answer the letter giving a logical solution to the problem. The teacher may have students read a few newspaper advice columns to familiarize themselves with this form of letter and response.

Fill Me In!

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

Much information is requested from a person who completes a job application. In this project, the student will fill out a job application as if he/she were the character from the novel who is now applying for a job. This assignment helps students discover if they can retain facts and if they understand the literary characterizations.

If The Fates Allow

(Obj. 1, 2, 3, 4)

Do we control our own lives or is there a greater force at work in planning our future? Pose this question to the class and encourage a class discussion. Students will then defend one of the following statements in regard to the novel that has been read: (a) the ending was the result of fate, or (b) the hero created his/her own destiny.

Change In Scenery

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

Describe how the story takes a different turn when the story moves to some other setting. Students chose another

setting for the story, describe the place and how the story would change.

#### Wanted Poster

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

The character in the story is missing. Create a poster that could be given to the authorities to be distributed in their efforts to locate the character. Brainstorm information that should be included on the poster; be sure to include this information in creative ways on the poster.

#### Coming To A Theater Near You

(Obj. 1, 4)

If the book read has been made into a movie this project is perfect for the class. After the students read the novel and have seen the movie in class, have the students compare and contrast the two versions as to characterization, setting, dialogue, plot, action, etc.

#### Courage

(Obj. 1, 2, 4)

All students have probably demonstrated an act of courage at some time or another. Students are to write a newspaper article for the local paper about their act of bravery. The article should be written in the third person and it should include details such as who, what, when, where, and how.

The book, Thinking Like a Writer by Lou Willett Stanek, has an entire section giving ideas on how to write a story. Many of these activities could be used in mini-lessons for the adventure story.

## Evaluation

Writing - 50% of the final grade would consist of:

A. Process Grade (three pieces taken to final drafts)

1. Content Grade - based on the quality of the piece taking into consideration the characteristics of effective writing.
2. Clarity Grade - organizes and presents content to meet reader's needs.
3. Mechanics Grade - spelling, punctuation, margins, paragraphing, legibility.
4. Focus Grade - narrows topics.
5. Commitment Grade - uses time productively; confers with self and proofreaders.
6. Risk-Taking Grade - willing to try new modes, topics, forms, techniques, etc.

B. Portfolio Grade

C. Weekly Grade - five (5) pieces of rough draft completed.

Reading - 50% of the final grade would consist of:

A. Participation Grade - have a book for sustained reading and participate in class discussions.

B. Weekly Grade - weekly response letter and reading log.

C. Journal Grade - based on quality and quantity of entries in daily journal.

D. Project Grade - presentation of self selected project relating to novel and visual aid.



## Glossary

Acrostic Poem - A poem created by using a person's name.

Each line, which begins with each letter in the name, is a sentence or a word that describes the person.

Class Book - A collection of writings by students or a group of students that would be published and distributed to the students periodically throughout the school year.

Daily Journal - A notebook a student keeps to write down thoughts, feelings, conversations, etc. that were relevant to them; much like a diary.

Final Copy - A piece of writing that has been revised and edited and is ready for publication.

Log - Students are to record the day, time, number of pages, and what was read.

Picture Book - A book containing pages with little text and with illustrations to reinforce the text.

Portfolio - A folder or notebook that contains the final copies of written pieces and all the rough drafts.

Project - A student selected project relating to a book he/she has read. The project is to be shared with the class and must consist of some type of visual aid. Examples might be a mobile, a poster or a billboard advertising book, a book mark, etc.

Rough Draft - Pieces of student's writing before the final copy is completed.

Teacher Conference - A student discusses the piece of writing with the teacher after the first draft to determine where the piece is heading.

Working Folder - A folder that contains the pieces of writing a student is working on.

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## CHAPTER V

### SUMMARY, CONCLUSIONS, AND RECOMMENDATIONS

#### Summary

The purpose of education is to prepare students to perform successfully as adults in society. However, many educators continue to view each discipline as a separate entity with little or no connection to students' lives. One way to make learning connected and meaningful, is to integrate reading and writing, not only in language, but also to include language use in all content areas. Therefore, the purpose of this project was to develop a guide to integrate reading and writing for use by seventh grade teachers.

In order to develop this guide, the writer reviewed current journal articles. These articles contained information on thematic units, different types of literature, and teaching strategies. The writer also reviewed professional textbooks written by three well-know authors and teachers in the area of whole language. All three authors offered ideas on how to structure an integrated program, including time schedule and workshops, student expectations, and methods of evaluation. Additionally, the guide was critiqued by two educational experts who offered their comments and suggestions.

The guide to integrate reading and writing was divided into four major categories. The first category states the purpose of the guide and the description of the school where

the guide is to be implemented. A list of student goals comprised the second category. The third category consisted of the four thematic units designed for nine week grading periods. Finally, the last category focused on evaluation. In addition, a glossary of terms and a bibliography of resources was included.

### Conclusions

An integrated approach to reading and writing requires more than just changing the materials and a few learning strategies. It involves the teacher changing his/her beliefs and philosophies about education. The adult is no longer considered the teacher and the students the learners. Rather it is a joint effort. The teacher and the students are both learners; learning about each other and learning about themselves as readers and writers immersed in a literate environment. Students are asked to make choices within certain parameters set by the teachers. As Atwell (1987) describes it, the students are put in the drivers seat, but the teacher still owns the car.

### Recommendations

This approach, to integrate reading and writing, should not be done half-heartedly. It requires time and considerable commitment, effort, risk-taking, and determination on the part of the teacher. Because of the drastic changes, teachers

will not be successful at everything the first time. Teachers will need to have the support and backing of their administrators and colleagues. It may take several years before the program produces the results desired. Also, it is important to remember that this approach is not meant for every teacher; it should not be forced upon any teacher. For this to be successful, the teacher has to believe in it, be willing to put heart and soul into the concept, and give total focus to the student needs.

Although this guide was designed for a specific school, with some adaptations, it can work in other schools and school districts. It is possible to make changes in this guide to fit a specific school or the school district's approved curriculum. One easy adaptation would be to change the thematic units. The themes could be about certain authors, a certain style of writing, a certain period of time, certain topics; the ideas are nearly endless. Within the units presented in the guide, the teacher could also change the required reading and add or change the suggested strategies. Time is another factor, both the length of the units and the class time being important. Changing the length of the units should not be difficult. It might also require changing some of the student expectations. Extended class time or block time would be beneficial -- it would allow the teacher time to conference with each student and students would have more

uninterrupted time to work. The best recommendation the writer can offer is for the teacher to try different things and to find what works for him or her; there are actually many options.

## APPENDICES



## Appendix A: Biopoem

Students use the following format by filling in the blanks to write a biopoem.

- Line 1    First name of the character
- Line 2    Four traits that describe the character
- Line 3    Relative (brother, sister, friend, etc.)  
          of \_\_\_\_\_
- Line 4    Lover of \_\_\_\_\_ (list three things or  
          people)
- Line 5    Who feels \_\_\_\_\_ (three items)
- Line 6    Who needs \_\_\_\_\_ (three items)
- Line 7    Who fears \_\_\_\_\_ (three items)
- Line 8    Who gives \_\_\_\_\_ (three items)
- Line 9    Who would like to see \_\_\_\_\_ (three items)
- Line 10   Resident of \_\_\_\_\_
- Line 11   Last name

## Appendix B: Box Of Crayons

### Box Of Crayons

What is a box of crayons?

A box of crayons is a collection of impressions.

Some are more blunted than others,

Worn down from creating memory pictures of rich experiences.

The color's individuality remains unnoticed

Until the choice is made

To pull a crayon out

And read its name.

Then a brief glimpse of a forgotten image

Of some glorious moment, whether it be

A well-turned phrase or a happening of the senses.

Tones the perception of the present.

The crayons are the mute testimony of the past

That waltz, foxtrot, tango across the parquetted floor,

Coloring memory's picture.

### Bittersweet

What is bittersweet?

Bittersweet is nature's harvest.

The musty smell of earth clinging to newly dug potatoes,

Turned out from their sage hole in the ground

Lying in the sun to dry.

It tastes like a ripe cantaloupe, a sweet twang,

That cools a hot body inside out.

Bittersweet is the pumpkin growing larger and larger,

Reminding the observer, "Frost is coming."

### Sky Blue

What is sky blue?

Sky blue is a seagull

Soaring and dipping like a kite tethered to the ground,

Testing the strength of a string.

It is a shadow on a snowbank.

Where a rabbit twitches his nose and

Wonders how long to warmer weather.

Sky blue is cotton candy,

Frosted spun air, captured on a paper cone,

Smelling of hot sweetness swirled with children's giggles.

It's a fleeting glimpse of the lace curtain  
Blowing at the window  
Against the backdrop of a full moon.

Sky blue was my grandma's ring  
That flashed as she taught me to crochet.

### Burnt Sienna

What is burnt sienna?

Burnt sienna is grandma's painted rocking chair,  
Sitting on the back porch,  
Creaking as it rocks,  
Comforting in its timelessness.

It is the smell of homemade bread  
Being pulled from the oven,  
Forcing one, by just breathing,  
to taste the yeasty loaf.

Burnt sienna is a thrush  
Sitting in the cherry tree,  
Flicking its tails as a warning,  
Acting as though the cherries are private domain.

It is oak leaves, dried,  
Waiting to fall to the ground,  
Clacking when the autumn breeze stirs.

Burnt sienna is cinnamon sprinkled on toast  
Before getting ready to go to school.

### Magenta

What is magenta?

Magenta is the deep pink of a rose bud,  
Waiting to unfurl like a sail  
Catching the evening breeze  
Pushing the magenta-tinged cloud across the sky.

Magenta is an old-fashioned ball gown,  
Waiting to be worn to a cotillion,  
Sweetened by verbena sachet,  
Muted by candlelight.  
It would splash its jewel tones onto the polished floor  
And reflect in a maiden's cheek and laughter.

Magenta is raspberry sherbet,  
Waiting to be served,

Melting in a fluted dish as the dinner conversation  
Melts into a rosy haze of remembrance.  
What is magenta?  
Magenta is a majestic warmth in humble quantities.

### Reprise

What is a box of crayons?  
A box of crayons is the illusive memory  
Colored on the back of an eyelid;  
A memory that comes at odd moments.

More vibrant because of the black background,  
More savory because of the subtle seasoning of time,  
More deafening because of its brush against forgotten  
feelings.

What is a box of crayons?  
A container of experiences  
Reminding us - memories color who we are.

Juanita Cocklin

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